

Thursday M-253  
~~Tuesday~~ Nov. 23, 1961  
Played on Thursday March 15, 1962

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Hilda and Robert Gardiner  
Robert Schoenholt  
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Last week we spoke about the necessity of asking questions. I see people during the week and they want to ask private questions. They should ask it in a group. What is the objection to asking in a group? People here are sympathetic; they are not your enemies. Questions need not involve secrets or private life. We are trying to wake up and we are all in the same boat. So there shouldn't be any difficulty in taking about your experience. The amount of difficulty depends on how serious your question is and how much you want an answer. The need for an answer should almost be that you gasp for breath, that you try to get air. Gradually questions will become like that and you will get over your timidity. Even if you stumble on words, I can understand what you are driving at. For some people it is necessary to ask questions and others not; it depends on type. The effort of asking questions is helpful to try to find out how to solve your questions. It gives you then more opportunity to work. It is up to you - I don't insist on questions. Don't wait if you really have to ask a question; don't make excuses.

QUESTION: (Don Harrison) Relates to the morning exercise. I've had moderate success in the morning but I can't apply it during the day.

ANSWER: It's not applying what you did in the morning. That time is finished. It can give you a certain amount of wish. You can have a memory which you refer to and bring back that taste. It can give you energy. This is the contact that is possible between the morning and during the day. If I do an exercise, I try to come in contact with something of a different and a higher nature. It is like going to church in order to discover and have communion with something in yourself. To do this exercise requires preparation - to meet the holiness of ones inner life. Ones essential existence is covered up. I do the exercise because I want to contact something within me. By means of relaxation and a harmonious condition, I can receive certain things from the outside. It has to do with my place on Earth and my relationship with things not of this Earth. It is my God to whom I appeal. If I try to have contact with what is really me, then it is as if God of my conscience is within me. From this collecting, this communion, you then start the day. The more intense it is, the better it is to start the day. When you are satisfied with your life you usually don't think about this higher level. When I collect, I wish not to let ordinary life drag it down. So I try to collect and make contact with infinity - a quality that I don't understand. I remember that during the day. I have the memory of the experience of the exercise. Later in the day, there is the possibility of making contact with this again. I remember the morning and the taste I had, and, by means of the memory, I bring back the wish to work. I don't just remember. I try to change the memory into the actuality of working. The morning contact has to be repeated by making an effort. I know it is possible. During the day, I try again to work when I remember the morning. Try it this week. It is a crutch that you don't really need if your desire to work is strong enough.

QUESTION: (Kate Harris) When you first talked about this exercise, I thought it was to put thoughts out of mind. I did that for two weeks. If you put all thoughts out of your mind, without bringing in sensation, then what center is working? When I concentrate on a limb it made me feel physically energetic.

ANSWER: It is necessary, particularly in the beginning, to define and re-define certain terms; to become more clear. It is confusing in the beginning. The fact that you receive energy from something that is new can take place even when you are unconscious. If I try to become conscious, I have first the ideas in my mind that it would be useful if I could acquire a faculty for objectivity. In trying to do this, I will uncover certain possibilities of myself and will become more conscious and more harmonious. I would have more control and more understanding. I feel that a change ought to be possible but I don't know how to go about it. I have to be on the alert to try to find out. I may be happy in being bound; I may be satisfied with my life, but I can not call it harmonious. Even if I am elated, I can not call myself a man. A good scientist may not be a good husband. He is not harmonious even if he is excellent in one direction. I can be an expert in something and still lack in other areas. I can have limited interests and limited friends. If my present state is not satisfactory, I must see that I have not as yet found a solution. How much am I disappointed? If I remain smug and satisfied and happy and I believe that I have self-will, then work on oneself is not for me. In work I try to free myself from things which mean a great deal to me. I will have to make sacrifices. This has to do with my motivation for wanting to become conscious. Now, I come down to Earth and assume that I want to work for the sake of ~~hexoninc~~ waking up because I realize that my present state is sleep, I start to study my habits, my beliefs, that which binds me. First I try to become aware of myself. At first, it is a thought; an idea I have in my mind. I have this concept of self-observation. I now select some of my manifestations to observe. My body exists and my mind observes. There must also be a wish; this is the third element. It's a feeling. It can trigger off the relationship between my mind and my mind. I try now to do the sensing exercise. Through it, I will find out what it is to be impartial, to do it simultaneously. It is a difficult concept because we don't know anything about moments. Every moment immediately becomes past and then I am in thought. I have to try to fulfill three things. I have to try to see my physical center, to see it without involvement and also simultaneously. I try to see my physical behavior: movements, postures, tones of voice, etc. These can also be seen by other people. I also can see my breathing and blood circulation; these can not be seen by other people. In the sensing exercise, I single out a part of my body, an arm or a leg. When I receive an image of my arm, it is recorded in my mind and also there is a sensation in my arm. The emotions must not enter, I must neither like it nor dislike it. I must not have any description of it. I'm dependant on emotional center for the wish to ~~work~~ sense. This is a static condition. It is only a statement of fact, no more. I have to learn to separate feeling from sensing. I always mix them up because the emotions and the body are so close. It is extremely difficult. I have to make an effort not to allow a feeling or a thought process. I sense in rotation. A certain form of attention is sent by my mind to my arm. I use this attention energy like a search light on my arm.

I can do this with my mind directed by my wish. My arm receives a statement of its existence in a sensation. My arm wishes that kind of sensation. My arm is more open, more ready to receive, more porous if it is relaxed. This is the condition that will help intensify sensation. Another condition that is favorable is to be quiet in my mind, not to be disturbed by the telephone, to close my eyes and to select a good time to do the exercise. One cannot stop thoughts. It is not possible. The mind continues to function. If it were to stop, it would die., because blood circulation would stop. Thoughts cannot be stopped in this manner. Thoughts can be stopped in being but now we won't talk about that. A Yogi can do this but that is not our way. We have to go in the direction of harmonious development and not in the development of any one center. Is the exercise clear now? At the beginning, you will discover much activity in your mind and then do not allow energy to go there because you are engaged in something that requires that energy. Trying to drain thoughts is still a thought. You understand?

QUESTION: (Fred Perleman) I had a task to make efforts instead of think. The first day it went well. I was more awake. But the rest of the week I was distracted and I couldn't keep my mind from wandering. I couldn't concentrate.

ANSWER: You start a day at a certain level. Then it slopes down towards ordinary life. In the course of a week, the day after the group, the level is the highest and then it goes down. But, if you know it will run down, you have to find ways and means to bring it up. How can you bring interest back? I have to realize on Thursday, Friday and Saturday that I am still a sleepy man and I have to ask if I want to continue to sleep or if I am interested in ~~becoming~~ becoming conscious. What will I allow? After I know that it's desirable to evolve, do I have a conscience? Where is my wish? If I say I have wish and I don't work then I am a weak character and I am hypocritical. That isn't right and it will paralyze your conscience. I have to introduce something into the balance; a wish to give up something in order to gain something on the other side of the balance. What are you willing to pay in order to gain? If your wish is real you will be willing to pay. What do I wish - ordinary life or inner life? Do I allow day after day to go by and miss opportunities? Do I have to remain a child? Every day that I live I am closer to my death. I don't want to be morbid, but can I ~~not~~ weigh my life? Am I satisfied with my life? At times you smell your presence and you say, "I stink." A man should be able to keep a promise to himself for a week. If there is nothing in me when I die, what is my account of myself? What is my trouble? Why can't I do a task? What is your relationship to your God, to your conscience? It doesn't matter what I or anybody else thinks of you. Sometimes I have to realize that I am responsible for my actions. Do I sin in that regard? Make up your mind to do, so help you God. Do it. Make a promise and fulfill it. Convert your thoughts into actuality and prove ~~that~~ to yourself that it is worthwhile to live. What is there that could be called real man, a man with a purpose, a man who can do. Give it more attention, more honesty and sincerity.

QUESTION: (Elizabeth Schaley) I did a task in the morning to wake up twice. The hardest thing was to wake up in time. I didn't use

track of the time during the day. (Then something about waste and wasting time)

ANSWER: You have a habit of unnecessary movements. Use that as a reminder to wake up. You don't have to suffer. The second day, use unnecessary emotions and the third day use unnecessary thoughts. As soon as you allow certain thoughts to take place: (considering, daydreaming, imagining, etc; when you catch them, become aware of them. Take that. One day for each of the three centers. The fourth day go back to the physical center and so on. On the seventh day, you can rest. Start right now. Don't move your arm/

QUESTION: (Charles Whittenburg) Even my most serious wish to work in connection with an easy task, I would forget about it. I would continually go back and forth between. I felt guilty.

ANSWER: Is the task too big. (yes) Then take a smaller one. Try, in talking, to use other words or use the same words or the same cliché in a different way, or use a different rhythm or a different ~~accent~~ emphasis. Don't be disappointed. You are not responsible for many things.

QUESTION: I am not disappointed but rather irritated.

ANSWER: Your irritation is because you don't want to be reminded. You want to continue to sleep. Sometimes it can happen that you wish you had never heard of Gurdjieff. It is a childish attitude. Somewhere in your emotional center you don't want to be disturbed. With one part of your brain you admit that that isn't right but still another part of your brain is satisfied. This is your fight against unconsciousness. This wish is not necessary for ordinary life. Only at certain times I can have a ~~wish~~ certain experience when there is a wish and then I will see the desirability of that different kind of taste.

QUESTION: I tried to observe opposition. I was surprised to see that there was so much physicality: eating, sleeping, drinking, sex.

ANSWER: This is produced by the intensity of sleep. It is a spiral that goes down and finally becomes one cell. This is not man. The unfortunate part is that we were born on Earth with a brain. Why is it necessary for mankind to have to work? Why couldn't man on Earth be on the level of an angel and not have to work for it? The reasons are: Earth is in an unfortunate place. Earth is at FA. It evolves so slowly that it will not happen in my lifetime. The other reason is that when I work, I become more than an angel because I can return to Earth and then perform anything that is required. This has a deeper meaning than just being an angel and playing the harp. My magnetic center responds to the possibility of growth. The satisfaction of inner life is worth far more than physical pleasures. One moment of realization is worth 30,000 of the other kind. Don't resent life. It goes up and down. That is a law. Take it all. I can not wait until the current goes up. Work means not to stand still. It is like waiting for a streetcar. If it doesn't come then I walk. I keep on walking even if I fall down or meet a detour. My aim is to wake up and for that I will continue. If there is a spark of life in me I will continue. If I do, I will have a new lease on life. It is not always winter, not always raining. I know thorough experience that certain things are possible. The possibility exists for everybody; the probability for only a few.

Introduce everything you possibly can today towards your wish to work. Wish with all your heart to convert a thought into an action of work. Some time again such efforts will undo the imbalance of my life. It will give me insight. If I try and I die in the attempt, I may die but at least I make the attempt.

A cell in my body may have a dream to become a brain cell. It is like wishing to go to Mecca. He may not go but at least he can turn in that direction. In that, the cell is rekindled. It is not the accomplishment but the wish that makes it continue. When that dies, everything dies.

QUESTION: (Joy Jackson) :ast week I had a task to wake up without the alarm clock. I set it at 7:25 because I wanted five minutes.

ANSWER: It has to be strict. You cannot change a task when you do it. You can only start with a new one. No loop holes, no back door.

QUESTION: I woke up every morning at 7:25 or 8:26.

ANSWER: Don't put water in the wine. We'll allow plus or minus one minute.

QUESTION: I did it every day except yesterday and today.

ANSWER: Do it again. Also try to wake up at three P.M. Take more of a position of wanting. Give a command at three o'clock to see where I am and to wake up to the situation in which I find myself. In the evening read for fifteen minutes from All and Everything. Try to absorb what you read. Go over what you don't understand. Take the chapter on Art. Report on it next week.

Try to remember work, be serious. You do nothing of this kind for someone else; maybe later on but not in the beginning. You have to be somebody before you can do something for someone else. You have to gain more understanding. Through being you can communicate particularly to children and then perhaps they will be grateful. Maybe someday you will be thankful for the existence of Gurdjieff and for the existence of the ideas.